

JUDICIAL BRANCH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY Report to Law and Justice Interim Committee

**Submitted by Office of Court Administrator
Montana Supreme Court
March 2016**

This report is submitted in compliance with section 3-1-702, MCA, which requires the court administrator to report to the Law and Justice Interim Committee on the status of development and procurement of information technology (IT) within the Judicial Branch. The report provides a Judicial Branch IT profile and a progress report on recent IT projects.

Judicial Branch IT Profile

The Office of Court Administrator (OCA) provides technology services through the Court Technology Program to nearly 1,000 users within the Supreme Court, the Water Court, 56 District Courts, 9 Municipal Courts, 63 Justice Courts, and 87 City Courts. This support includes the purchase, installation, networking, and maintenance of computers and office software and the deployment, training, and maintenance of court case management systems. In addition, the OCA provides support for courtroom technology, including interactive video, court reporting and recording equipment, sound systems, and other technologies found in the courtroom.

The Supreme Court's Commission on Technology provides guidance and oversight to the court technology program. The Commission prepares the information technology strategic plan and monitors performance of the plan throughout the year. The current plan is available at: <http://www.courts.mt.gov/cao/technology/default.mcp.x>.

The following table lists the major IT projects for the Judicial Branch during the 2015 biennium.

Judicial Branch IT Projects and Accomplishments – 2015 Biennium

Courtroom Technology & Interactive Video

In addition to the previously reported biennial accomplishments, In Fiscal 2015 the OCA has installed/upgraded the following:

VIDEO CONFERENCING UNIT UPGRADES/INSTALLS

- Gallatin County (2 units)
- Jefferson County (1 unit)
- Lewis & Clark County (4 units)
- Montana Law Library (1 unit)
- Madison County (1 unit)
- Yellowstone County (2 units)
- Missoula County (3 units)
- Flathead County (1 unit)
- Mineral County (1 unit)
- Stillwater (1 unit)
- **22 additional replacements planned throughout the biennium**

AUDIO UNIT UPGRADES/INSTALLS/PORTABLE INSTALLS

- Cascade County Upgrades (3 Courtrooms)
- Lewis & Clark County Upgrade (1 Courtroom)
- Yellowstone County Upgrades (3 Courtrooms)
- Missoula County Upgrade (3 Courtroom)
- Sanders County Full Install (1 Courtroom)
- Sweetgrass County Portable Install
- Granite County Portable Install
- Prairie County Portable Install
- Treasure County Portable Install
- **5 new installs, 8 upgrades, 14 portable installs planned through the biennium**

In Fiscal 2015 no new additional installs or upgrades of Court Reporter Equipment was necessary.

JUNE 2014 REPORTING

In addition to the interactive video conferencing added in 2011 and the 10 previously installed sites that were provided upgraded Polycom and television equipment, in 2013 and 2014 an economized video conferencing solution was installed in Petroleum, Golden Valley, Daniels and Liberty Counties.

In FY 2013 and FY 2014 a new portable audio system was installed in McCone County. New full-scale audio systems were installed in Rosebud, Mineral, Jefferson, Powell, Lake, and 2 courtrooms in Gallatin Counties. In addition, courtrooms were upgraded in Ravalli and Lewis & Clark Counties.

Court reporting equipment was upgraded or replaced for 7 Court Reporters in various counties.

Justice Integration

In September 2014 the OCA was awarded the 2014 National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) Grant in the amount of \$1,772,635 to upgrade the trial court FullCourt case management system to FullCourt Enterprise, a fully centralized statewide case management system incorporating a leading-edge integration platform enabling quick and easy exchange of data, regardless of the different technologies.

A significant benefit of the FullCourt Enterprise project is the continued improvement of electronic data exchanges (citations, dispositions, hearings and court orders, pre-sentence investigations, vital statistics data) with various justice partner agencies such as the Departments of Justice, Corrections, Public Health and Human Services, and Transportation.

In addition to the 2012 completion of the Department of Justice/Montana Highway Patrol citation data and image exchange and Roadside Payments, the OCA has completed implementations of citation data and image exchanges with the Motor Carrier Services Division of the Department of Transportation and the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, as well as implementation of Roadside Payments for each.

The OCA continues electronic delivery of a monthly statewide assessment and collection data report to the Office of the Public Defender. The automated delivery of this information began in August 2013.

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED


Working together with the Departments of Justice, Corrections and Transportation, projects continue to improve the electronic exchange of information (e.g., citations, dispositions, hearings and other court orders) between justice agencies.

Completion of Department of Justice/Montana Highway Patrol citation data and image exchange to the Justice Courts FullCourt case management systems was 100% complete in 2012. In addition, the OCA worked with Montana Interactive and the Montana Highway Patrol to implement Roadside Payments (credit card payments in the patrol car) in 90% of the courts accepting electronic MHP citations. The implementation and training was completed in June 2013. The remaining 10% of the courts will not implement Roadside Payments due to court layout or database configuration.

Work continues with DOJ Criminal History Records to provide daily electronic case data improving their ability to making stronger records matches and provide more accurate data elements for records in the Criminal History Records System. This process was further enhanced in 2014 when the OCA delivered to the Criminal Records Division an in-house developed statewide court records query and matching system.

Work continues with the MDT National Highway Traffic Safety Program and DUI Task Forces to provide quarterly traffic violation data.

<p>Court Case Management</p>	<p>As mentioned previously, the OCA is upgrading the FullCourt case management system to the next generation FullCourt Enterprise. The project initiation began in April 2015 and the 11th Judicial District (Flathead County) pilot implementation will be completed in August 2017. After the pilot implementation, the OCA will continue the statewide implementation within IT Division staffing resources.</p> <p>Development of the Montana FullCourt Enterprise system is being done via a fully collaborative effort between the vendor, Justice Systems, Inc., and the automation committees of the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction and Clerks of District Court. Throughout the development life the committees meet monthly with the OCA IT Division Director, FullCourt Project Manager, and JSI's Project Manager and Lead Court Specialist. The group identifies program gaps between FC V5 and FCE, statewide configuration standards for more accurate and effective reporting and Montana specific customizations (statutory or otherwise). This process provides members of both automation committees a significant advantage in terms of experience and knowledge of the system and the ability to assist in statewide implementations.</p> <p>Court IT staff continue efforts with the automation committees to improve and standardize jury, documents, reporting and case management processes in Montana courts.</p> <p>The CitePay Bond at the Jail project (allowing defendants, or representatives of, to pay bonds on warrants and bond defendants out of jail) is moving slowly because of the substantial coordination required between courts, judges, and detention facility personnel, in addition to continual detention facility staff turnover. An additional 3 court to detention facility installs were approved in 2014 and have been undergoing implementation activities and coordination throughout 2015 and early 2016.</p> <p><u>PREVIOUSLY REPORTED</u></p> <p><i>CitePay – statewide implementation of an online payment system to all Courts of Limited Jurisdiction allowing defendants to make fine and fee payments online.</i></p> <p><i>Designed and piloting an online payment functionality allowing defendants, or representatives of, to pay bonds on warrants and bond defendants out of jail using CitePay.</i></p> <p><i>In 2014 completed a standardization project for the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction. There are 189 COLJ databases containing over 3,000 distinct entries in the Register of Actions table. Upon completion, all 189 databases</i></p>
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	<p>were converted to 166 standard Register of Action entries.</p> <p><i>Implementation of an Inactivity Dismissal process in each of the 56 District Courts. The process manages the courts caseloads by retrieving cases for notice of inactivity and potentially automatic dismissal.</i></p> <p><i>A central reporting system was deployed for drug court personnel to report and conduct program evaluations. A project is underway for coordinators to more efficiently track recidivism of clients either entering or discharging from a drug court program.</i></p> <p><i>The Juvenile Case Tracking System was updated to a new, modern platform through federal grant dollars. The update was focused on a new technology but includes program updates that will allow better tracking of program effectiveness and additional reporting capabilities for local planning.</i></p>
<p> Electronic Filing</p>	<p>The Montana E-Filing Project is still underway. The Supreme Court has been live with Phase I, government to government e-filing since November 2014.</p> <p><u>As of February 2016</u> 278 Registered E-File Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Supreme Court Justices • 92 Attorneys/21 Prosecutors • 1 Clerk of the Supreme Court/37 Clerks of the District Court • 113 Authorized Staff • 8 Court Reporters <p>Approximately 6,216 filings on 549 cases at the Supreme Court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5,972 Approved Filings / 244 Rejected Filings ○ 50.4% of the Court's current caseload are e-file enabled cases <p>The Trial Court implementation of Phase I E-Filing has been delayed due to vendor project management issues. As of March 2016 the OCA is anticipating a pilot Phase 1 implementation in the first trial court (4th Judicial District) in late-summer to early-fall 2016.</p> <p>The e-filing system is the second largest IT project undertaken by the Judicial Branch. Full implementation will take several years as it involves private attorneys and self-represented litigants.</p> <p><u>PREVIOUS REPORTING</u> <i>In September of 2012 the E-Filing contract was awarded to LT Court Tech and in January of 2013 contract negotiations were finalized. Throughout 2013 the OCA worked with the vendor on project plans, as well as design and development of the Montana E-Filing system. The project will initially involve government to government files and cases (i.e. criminal and traffic cases, child abuse and neglect cases and involuntary commitment cases).</i></p>
	<p>The Clerk of the Supreme Court led an effort to provide public</p>

<p>Strategic Goal</p> <p>Public Access</p>	<p>access to the Supreme Court's docket through the Judicial Branch website. The docket includes the full public docket and associated documents for Supreme Court cases dating back to 2006. The Judicial Branch website was redesigned with the objective of providing a cleaner access to court information for litigants and the public.</p>
<p>Strategic Goal</p> <p>Future Projects</p>	<p><u>Future Technology Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Montana Drug Court Technology Project</u> (2016 IT Strategic Initiative for 2017 Biennium) – A 2015 performance audit of the Montana Drug Courts, recommended the OCA undertake efforts to identify technologies and funding options for a statewide Management Information System for all Montana Drug Courts. This project is the initial phase. • <u>Water Court Technology Project</u> (2019 Legislative Session) – Efforts have begun to develop a collaborative Water Court/DNRC strategic initiative to improving Water Court case processing and access to water court records, as well as increasing the utility of water court rights records in the State of Montana.